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**Director**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **State Receives Extension for Submitting Request for Federal Declaration**

***Deadline for request is now Feb. 26***

SPRINGFIELD – The state of Illinois this week requested and received an extension for submitting a request to the federal government for a major disaster declaration related to severe storms and flooding in late December and early January. The original deadline for such submission was Feb. 12. The state now has until Feb. 26 to request federal assistance.

“In some parts of the state, floodwaters only recently subsided to the point where we were able to accurately document the damages,” said James K. Joseph, director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). “We just concluded joint damage assessments with FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration earlier this week and need more time to thoroughly review that information in order to better define the true impact of the event.”

FEMA and IEMA began reviewing flood and storm-related costs with local government officials in 19 counties on Feb. 1, while FEMA, SBA and IEMA began assessing damage to homes and businesses in 10 counties on Feb. 4.

Joseph said in addition to documenting response and recovery costs and numbers of structures damaged, the assessment teams also noted other disaster-related impacts that could impede a community’s ability to recover, including displacement of residents, the economic effects of road closures on businesses and workers and concerns in areas that have been hit by floods twice in less than a year.

The state will decide by Feb. 26 if a state request for federal assistance is warranted. There are two types of federal assistance the state may request: Individual Assistance, which would provide grants and low-interest loans to people affected by the disaster; and Public Assistance, which would enable local governments to recoup some of their disaster-related expenses.

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